

## Message Text

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17

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-07 AID-05 MMS-04 CIAE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

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TAGS: EAID, PFOR, MP

SUBJECT: EDITORIAL ON CYCLONE AID EFFORTS

FOLLOWING IS PARTIAL TRANSLATION FROM FRENCH OF EDITORIAL IN  
NEWSPAPER WEEKEND FEBRUARY 16, WHICH APPEARED UNDER HEADLINE  
"CHARITY WITHOUT STRINGS".

QTE: UP TO NOW, SEVEN FOREIGN COUNTRIES HAVE OFFERED AID TO THE  
MAURITIAN GOVERNMENT FOR THE RECONSTRUCTION OF THE INFRASTRUCTURE  
OF THE ISLAND OR FOR FOOD STUFFS AND MEDICINES; THE UNITED STATES  
THE SOVIET UNION, GREAT BRITIAN, FRANCE, SOUTH AFRICA, INDIA AND  
THE SEYCHELLES.

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THE MOST SUBSTANTIAL AID UNTIL NOW HAS COME FROM THE UNITED

STATES, WHICH, TWO DAYS AFTER THE DISASTER, SENT A WARSHIP TO PORT LOUIS. THE CREW OF THE SHIP AIDED IN CLEARING THE PRINCIPAL ROADS OF THE ISLAND. ALSO, THE US GOVERNMENT HAS PUT AT THE DISPOSAL OF MAURITIUS THE SERVICES OF NEARLY 5,000 SAILORS WHO ARE ON BOARD THE USS ENTERPRISE, THE LARGEST WARSHIP IN THE WORLD. THESE SAILORS INCLUDING MANY TECHNICIANS, HAVE ASSISTED PRINCIPALLY IN THE REESTABLISHMENT OF THE POWER SUPPLY, IN THE RESTORATION OF PUBLIC BUILDINGS, THE CLEARING OF ROADS, REPAIRS TO THE TELEPHONE NETWORK AND, WITH THE AID OF POWERFUL HELICOPTERS, ASSISTED IN REMOUNTING MANY ELECTRIC POLES. MEDICINES AND BREAD WERE ALSO GIVEN TO THE MAURITIAN GOVERNMENT.

IN ADDITION, THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR HAS ALREADY CONTRIBUTED (SIC) \$25,000 (RUPEES 130,000) TO THE PRIME MINISTER'S FUND FOR THE RECONSTRUCTION OF DAMAGED HOUSES. FINALLY, IT HAS BEEN DECIDED THAT MAURITIUS BE DECLARED A DISASTER ZONE FOR THE PURPOSES OF U.S. EMERGENCY RELIEF.

ASSISTANCE OF AMERICAN TECHNICIANS HAS BEEN OF GREAT VALUE AND NUMEROUS MAURITIANS HAVE BEEN FILLED WITH ADMIRATION IN THE FACE OF THEIR COMPETENCE IN THE ELECTRICAL FIELD AND THEIR WORK ARDOR.

THE DIEGO BOMB DEFUSED?

THE MASSIVE AMERICAN PRESENCE AFTER THE CYCLONE HAS NOT FAILED TO AROUSE GREAT INTEREST AMONG THE PEOPLE AND TO BE USED FOR POLITICAL PROPAGANDA ENDS. THUS, AS SOON AS THE AMERICANS ARRIVED AMONG US, THE PMSD, THROUGH ITS NEWSPAPER, EXULTED AND TOOK A SWIPE AT THE LABOR PARTY: ONE WEEK EARLIER THE AMERICANS HAD BEEN CALLED IMPERIALISTS ON TV IN THE COURSE OF THE FORUM ON DIEGO GARCIA AND THEIR PRESENCE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN HAD BEEN DISCUSSED AND CONTESTED. NOW, THEY HAVE BEEN THE FIRST TO SUCCOR US, PROCLAIMED LE POPULAIRE, AND, CONTINUED THE PAPER, THE LABOR PARTY, WITHOUT PRIDE, MADE URGENT APPEALS TO THEM. A VERY DEBATABLE ARGUMENT INDEED BECAUSE, DURING A DISASTER CHARITY CANNOT BE SELECTIVE, BUT IS SUCH AS TO STRIKE THE POPULAR IMAGINATION. LIKEWISE, TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE AMERICAN PRESENCE, THE PMSD DID NOT MISS A SINGLE OCCASION TO REMIND US THAT THE RUSSIANS, FRIENDS OF MAURITIUS, A WEEK AFTER THE CYCLONE HAD STILL NOT PUT IN AN APPEAR- AND AND WHEN THEY ARRIVE, A SUBSTANTIAL AMOUNT OF WORK WOULD ALREADY HAVE BEEN ACCOMPLISHED. THE MAIN PURPOSE OF THIS CAMPAIGN IS CLEAR: REFURBISH THE IMAGE OF AMERICA AND OF THE WEST IN MAURITIUS AFTER THE ANTI-DIEGO CAMPAIGN OF THE PROGRESSIVES, AND UNCLASSIFIED

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DENIGRATE THE RUSSIANS (WHO ARRIVE TOMORROW IN 3 SHIPS).

HOWEVER SPONTANEOUS AND USEFUL THE AMERICAN AID HAS BEEN IN THE COURSE OF THE LAST FEW DAYS, IT IS CLEAR THAT ALL THIS OPERATION OF ASSISTANCE HAS ALSO BEEN CAREFULLY CALCULATED BY THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR TO MAURITIUS, MR. MANHARD TO DEFUSE THE ANTI-DIEGO CAMPAIGN. IT IS UNDENIABLE THAT THE POPULARITY OF AMERICANS HAS GROWN IN CERTAIN CIRCLES WHERE POLITICAL UNDERSTANDING IS A RARE COMMODITY. THE PROVERBIAL AMERICAN EFFICIENCY

MAY THUS HAVE DESTROYED A GOOD PART OF THE AGITATION RECENTLY UNDERTAKEN RELATIVE TO THE MILITARIZATION OF THE INDIAN OCEAN.

THE AMERICAN PRESENCE IN MAURITIUS THE DAY AFTER THE CYCLONE ALSO COINCIDED WITH THE WEEK OF STRUGGLE AGAINST THE MILITARIZATION OF THE INDIAN OCEAN. MR. MANHARD HAS WORKED WELL FOR HIS COUNTRY\*

NO POPULAR MOBILIZATION WITHOUT POPULAR GOVERNMENT.

PROGRESSIVE FORCES ON THEIR PART CANNOT HIDE A CERTAIN ANNOYANCE IN THE FACE OF A MASSIVE AMERICAN PRESENCE. MASS MOBILIZATION WOULD HAVE PERMITTED THE SAME WORK WITHOUT FOREIGN AID, DECLARED MR. DEV VIRAHSAWMY, ASSEMBLY MEMBER AND LEADER OF THE MMMSP, BUT HOW IS IT POSSIBLE TO HAVE POPULAR MOBILIZATION WITHOUT A POPULAR GOVERNMENT? IN TRUTH, IT IS NOT CERTAIN THAT MAURITIANS ALONE WOULD HAVE AFFECTED THE FIRST STEP OF THE REHABILITATION SO RAPIDLY. ALL INDEPENDENT OBSERVERS RECOGNIZE THAT THE FOREIGN HELICOPTERS (FRENCH AND AMERICAN) HAVE DONE REMARKABLE WORK WHICH MEN AND TRUCKS WOULD FIND DIFFICULT TO DO IN A WEEK.

IN THIS LITTLE WAR OF INFLUENCE, IT SEEMS THAT THE AMERICANS ARE THE GREAT VICTORS OF THE FIRST POST-FORUM ROUND. THE RUSSIANS ONLY ARRIVE TOMORROW, BUT THIS PROVES THAT THE RUSSIANS ARE NOT PRESENT EVERYWHERE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN AS PEOPLE THINK, AND THAT THE AMERICANS KEEP A CLOSER WATCH ON THE OCEAN THAN THEIR ADVERSARIES. ON NOTES, IN FACT, THAT THE RUSSIAN SHIPS WHICH ARRIVE TOMORROW COME FROM THE MIDDLE EAST AND HAVE, THEREFORE, TAKEN 7 FULL DAYS TO REACH MAURITIUS.

RUSSIAN AID, PROPOSED DURING THE FIRST DAY BY AMBASSADOR BANDURA, IS LIMITED SO FAR TO A GIFT OF 12 TONS OF FROZEN FISH WHICH HAVE BEEN DISTRIBUTED THROUGHOUT THE ISLAND AND IN HOSPITALS.

FRENCH AID HAS ALSO BEEN PARTICULARLY PROMINENT. FRENCH AID IS PARTICULARLY CONCENTRATED ON CLEARING THE ROADS AND REPAIRING PUBLIC BUILDINGS. THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE ENGLISH HAS BEEN PARTICULARLY DISAPPOINTING. THE WILSON GOVERNMENT, ANNOUNCED THAT INITIAL AID WOULD AMOUNT TO LB12,000 (ABOUT RUPEES 140,000). AN INSIGNIFICANT SUM OF LB2,000 OF MEDICINE AND LB10,000 FOR BLANKETS, UNCLASSIFIED

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WATER TANKS, ETC., A MESSAGE OF SYMPATHY, A DESTROYER WHICH ARRIVES MONDAY, 10 DAYS AFTER THE DISASTER. AND THAT IS ABOUT ALL.

THE ROYAL NAVY, INSTALLED AT VACOAS OFFERED SERVICES OF TECHNICIANS AND HMS MAURITIUS GAVE TONS OF FROZEN PRODUCE.

INDIA, PARTICULARLY CLOSE TO MAURITIUS, ALSO WAS A LITTLE LATE IN ITS OFFER. IT IS ONLY YESTERDAY THAT WE LEARNED THAT THIS COUNTRY INTENDED TO GIVE TECHNICAL AID TO MAURITIUS. ENGINEERS AND EQUIPMENT WILL BE RAPIDLY SENT TO HELP REESTABLISH THE ELECTRICAL AND TELEPHONE DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM, BUT THERE WAS NOT MENTION OF FINANCIAL AID.

ANOTHER UNEXPECTED FRIEND: SOUTH AFRICA, DENOUNCED BY MAURITIUS AT THE OAU AND AT THE UN, HAS PROMISED MEDICAL AID AND HAS SENT TO THE PEOPLE OF MAURITIUS A MESSAGE OF SYMPATHY, THE SEYCHELLES, FINALLY, ORGANIZED A COLLECTION FOR AID TO MAURITIAN VICTIMS. SEVERAL MESSAGES OF SYMPATHY HAVE BEEN RECEIVED FROM

THE THIRD WORLD, BUT NO PROMISES OF AID. THE UN, HOWEVER, IS MAKING A SUBSTANTIAL CONTRIBUTION THROUGH CERTAIN OF ITS SPECIALIZED AGENCIES WHICH HAVE ALREADY PROMISED AID EXCEEDING 2,000,000 RUPEES.

IT IS NOW CERTAIN THAT ONCE THE INITIAL SHOCK IS OVER, THESE VARIOUS AID EFFORTS WILL BE THE OBJECT OF ANIMATED POLITICAL DISCUSSIONS. ALREADY SOME ARE REPROACHING THE GOVERNMENT FOR HAVING BOWED LOW BEFORE THE UNITED STATES (WHICH IT DENOUNCED A WEEK EARLIER ON TV). OTHERS, ON THE CONTRARY, WILL EXPLOIT TO THE FULLEST THE AMERICAN SOLICITUDE TOWARD MAURITIUS SINCE THE FIRST DAYS FOLLOWING THE CYCLONE. THE TRADITIONAL 'YANKEES GO HOME' ANTI-AMERICAN MANIFESTATIONS COULD WELL BE SUCCEEDED BY ANOTHER WAVE OF CLEVERLY CONDUCTED PROPAGANDA FOR THE WEST AROUND THE SLOGAN 'YANKEES STAY AROUND'. UNQTE.  
MANHARD

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